What Is Claimed Is:

1.   A method for trading image information comprising the steps of:

imaging an object using camera means so that a digital image of said object is acquired;

preparing digital image information in which information relating to the place and time at which said object was imaged, and information relating to the environment, are added to said acquired digital image; and

transmitting said prepared digital image information via communications means, and further receiving on the transmission side of said digital image information, via said communications means, information from the reception side of said digital image information confirming that said information has been transmitted , and receiving payment for said output digital image information from a customer.

2.   The method for trading image information according to claim 1, wherein said information relating to the place and time at which said object was imaged comprises longitude and latitude information received from a GPS, and standard time information.

3.   The method for trading image information according to claim 1, wherein said information relating to the place where said object was imaged comprises one or more types of information selected from air temperature, humidity, illumination, intensity of ultraviolet radiation, altitude, air pressure, wind velocity, degree of cleanness and sound.

4. The method for trading image information according to claim 1, wherein the name or code number of a person performing the imaging who acquired said digital image is further added to said digital image information.

5. A method for trading image information comprising the steps of:

calling up a digital image which has been acquired by imaging an object of inspection, and which has been stored in memory means along with the imaging environment conditions at the time that said digital image was imaged, via communications means;

displaying the imaging environment conditions at the time that the called-up digital image was imaged on a screen;

imaging said object of inspection in accordance with said displayed imaging environment conditions;

adding information relating to the imaging environment conditions at the time of said imaging to the digital image obtained by said imaging;

transmitting the digital image to which said information relating to the imaging environment conditions has been added to the reception side via communications means; and

receiving payment for said transmitted digital image from a customer.

6. The method for trading image information according to claim 5, wherein said imaging environment conditions include the place and time where said object was imaged, the person who performed the imaging, and information relating to the environment at the place where said imaging was performed.

7.   The method for trading image information according to claim 5, wherein said information relating to the environment at the location where said imaging was performed includes any of air temperature, humidity, illumination, intensity of ultraviolet radiation, altitude, air pressure, wind velocity, degree of cleanness and sound.

8.   A method for trading image information comprising the steps of:

imaging parts in which metals are welded so that a digital image of said welded parts is obtained;

preparing digital image information by adding to said acquired digital image imaging environment conditions at the time when said digital image was acquired;

transmitting said prepared digital image information to the reception side via communications means;

detecting defects in said welded parts from said digital image information that is received on the reception side;

outputting information relating to detected defects in said welded parts along with an image of said welded parts including said defects; and

receiving payment from a customer for said output information relating to said defects in the welded parts and said image of the welded parts.

9.   The method for trading image information according to claim 8, wherein said digital image of welded parts acquired by imaging said parts in which metals are welded is a digital image of parts in which metals are welded which have been subjected to a penetrant test processing or a magnetic particle test processing.

10.   The method for trading image information according to claim 8, wherein said imaging environment conditions include the place and time where said object was imaged, the person who performed the imaging, and information relating to the environment at the place where said imaging was performed.

11.   The method for trading image information according to claim 8, wherein said information relating to the environment at the location where said imaging was performed includes any of air temperature, humidity, illumination, intensity of ultraviolet radiation, altitude, air pressure, wind velocity, degree of cleanness and sound.

12.   The method for trading image information according to claim 8, wherein defects in said welded parts are detected by subjecting said digital image to image processing.

13.   A method for trading image information comprising the steps of:

acquiring a digital image of welded parts obtained by imaging metal welded parts, along with data relating to the imaging environment conditions at the time that said digital image was imaged, via communications means;

detecting defects in said metal welded parts from said acquired digital image;

outputting information relating to said detected defects in said welded parts along with an image of said welded parts including said defects via communications means; and

receiving payment from a customer for said output information relating to defects in said welded parts and said image of said welded parts.

14. The method for trading image information according to claim 13, wherein said digital image of welded parts acquired by imaging said parts in which metals are welded is a digital image of parts in which metals are welded which have been subjected to a penetrant test processing or a magnetic particle test processing.

15. The method for trading image information according to claim 13, wherein said imaging environment conditions include the place and time where said object was imaged, the person who performed the imaging, and information relating to the environment at the place where said imaging was performed.

16. The method for trading image information according to claim 13, wherein said information relating to the environment at the location where said imaging was performed includes any of air temperature, humidity, illumination, intensity of ultraviolet radiation, altitude, air pressure, wind velocity, degree of cleanness and sound.

17. The method for trading image information according to claim 13, defects in said welded parts are detected by subjecting said digital image to image processing.

18. A method for trading image information comprising the steps of:

receiving a digital image obtained by imaging an object of inspection, along with data relating to the imaging environment conditions including GPS information relating to the location where said digital image was imaged, via communications means;

inspecting said object of inspection by subjecting said received digital image to image processing;

transmitting information obtained by said inspection to the customer via communications means; and

receiving payment for said transmitted information obtained by said inspection from a customer.

19. The method for trading image information according to claim 18, wherein said object of inspection is a member in which metals are welded, which has been subjected to a penetrant test processing or a magnetic particle test processing, and said inspection of said object of inspection by subjecting said received digital image to image processing comprises the detection of defects in said metal welded parts.

20. The method for trading image information according to claim 18, wherein said information relating to the environment at the location where said imaging was performed includes any of air temperature, humidity, illumination, intensity of ultraviolet radiation, altitude, air pressure, wind velocity, degree of cleanness and sound.

21. A method for trading image information comprising the steps of:

receiving a digital image obtained by imaging an object of inspection, along with data relating to the imaging environment conditions at the time that said digital image was imaged and an image obtained by imaging resolution evaluation samples, via communications means;

inspecting said object of inspection using said received digital image and said image of resolution evaluation samples;

transmitting information obtained by said inspection to the customer via communications means; and

receiving payment for said transmitted information obtained by said inspection from said customer.

22. The method for trading image information according to claim 21, wherein said object of inspection is a member in which metals are welded, which has been subjected to a penetrant test processing or a magnetic particle test processing, and said inspection of said object of inspection by subjecting said received digital image to image processing comprises the detection of defects in said metal welded parts.

23. The method for trading image information according to claim 21, wherein said information relating to the environment at the location where said imaging was performed includes any of air temperature, humidity, illumination, intensity of ultraviolet radiation, altitude, air pressure, wind velocity, degree of cleanness and sound.

24. A method for trading image information comprising the steps of:

imaging an object by camera means so that a digital image of said object is obtained;

preparing digital image data in which one or more sets of digital image information are added to said acquired digital image;

and

transmitting said prepared digital image information via communications means, receiving on the transmission side of said digital image information, via communications means, information from the reception side of said digital image information confirming that said information has been

transmitted, and receiving payment for said transmitted digital image information from a customer.

25.   The method for trading image information according to claim 24, wherein digital image information detects alterations of said digital image.

26.   The method for trading image information according to claim 24, wherein said digital image information includes information relating to whether or not falsification has occurred subsequent to the preparation of the digital image information.

27.   The method for trading image information according to claim 24, wherein said digital image information is electronic watermark information in which characters or figures are embedded in said digital image.

28.   The method for trading image information according to claim 24, wherein said character or figure information embedded by electronic watermark processing includes any information relating to the place, time or environment of the imaging of said digital image.

29.   The method for trading image information according to claim 24, wherein said digital image information is an electronic signature in which said digital image is converted into a summary by a hush function, and the summary is encoded using an encoding key.

30.   A method for trading image information comprising the steps of:

imaging parts in which metals are welded, so that a digital image of said welded parts is acquired;

preparing digital image information by adding one or more sets of digital image information that have image falsification preventing means;

detecting defects in said welded parts from said digital image information;

displaying image information relating to said detected defects; and

outputting information relating to said detected defects along with an image of said welded parts including said defects via communications means; and

receiving payment for said output information relating to said defects and said images of the welded parts from a customer.